

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

which no move to help itself. They will never be able to equal their ancestors artistically, politically, or spiritually. Their economic future is more than dubious. They are doomed to disappear before the AiHiamite immigration. Of what use is an attempt to interfere with nature's selection of the fittest for survival?

NATIVE REACTION TO THE FRENCH PROTECTORATE

The core of the Khmer reaction to French control is the fact that the Protectorate was sought and not imposed, and this has eliminated all the psychological complications arising from the juxtaposition of victor and vanquished. An immediate and real protection was given to Cambodia from the encroachments of the Siamese and Annamites. When the two lost provinces were restored in 1907, French prestige was enormously enhanced and Khmer national pride vindicated. It is safe to prophesy that so long as their heritage remains, as well as its symbol, the royal power, the Khmers will be loyal to the Protectorate.

The king's sovereignty has been definitely tampered with and often in a stupidly tactless manner. This was partly due to uprushes of assimilationism analogous to what happened in the Annamite countries, and partly to the personality of the Khmer kings. Norodom incarnated Oriental wiles and childishness in his reaction to the new Western world. He adored every new gadget and he mixed them indiscriminately with Cambodian objects. He wore a series of semi-military uniforms studded with precious stones; his palaces were filled with toys; he had a statue of Napoleon III decapitated and his own head substituted—symbolic of the superimposing, tiBa}gaiBatIOns of one civilization upon another. His

subjects
 the royal example in so far as they were able. His
 up bicycling with ardour until a new Resident Superior
 a motor-car, so they abandoned cycling and bought
 cam,
 for the raucous Klaxon. The king built a
 in the worst possible European taste, and they did
 likewise.
 Aa by-product of tMs inrush of bad
 Occidentalism was the
 of the Cambodian arts. An amusing picture of
 Norodom_t
 in has left by Rivitee when die king—then
 in his forty^seventi
 of seventy-two offspring—visited him on board
 Ms Norodom with the twenty-one-gua
 salute*
 by the portable roulette wheel the commandant had
 Km. Tie spent such a delightful evening that
 he